

The role of women in medea by euripides



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In the ancient Greek tragedy *Medea* by Euripides, Jason is given the task to capture the Golden Fleece and needs Medea's help for this task, so she helps him using her magical powers. Not only does she help him, she falls in love with him, and marries him. She also went against her family and left them "All those she betrayed / when she left with the man who now rejects her" (lines 32-33). Medea then makes plans to murder Pelias and the couple becomes exiled from Corinth. They have two children together, but Jason wants to become more powerful. He then leaves Medea to marry the princess of Corinth. He says he wants to give his children protection by fathering royal siblings. This leaves Medea feeling betrayed. From then on, she wants revenge. She planned to kill the mistress and her children to hurt Jason. Women of ancient Greek have limited roles and this makes Medea angry. These limitations causes her to act out. The role of ancient Greek women are not on the same level as Greek men.

Traditions have caused men and women to determine certain gender roles in society. Gender roles are defined as what a person does (duties) and how the person expresses their feelings (emotions). The duty of ladies in Greek society is an important subject in Euripides' *Medea*. In old Greek society, ladies are fragile and willing as indicated by men. Their economic interest comes second. Woman's rights is the idea of men being dealt with in comparison to ladies and the male strength over these women. When Jason betrays Medea, she is a test to the conventional perspectives on old Greek society dependent on her activities. Medea disregards female characteristics and questions Jason's beliefs. It's a battle on the inside between herself and being a mother. In tragedies women usually play the main role because the

author tries to highlight how women were being treated in that society. Euripides uses this to show a feministic perspective in his play. Medea showed both male and female tendencies.

Women are under the politics and influence of men. They want to do more and are smart enough to do more, but they cannot. Medea says “ I would rather face battle/three times than go through childbirth once” (246-247). Women have two roles, being a housewife and being a mother. They are expected to stay in and take care of the house and children, while men do whatever they please. Men get to have sex with whomever they want and women are expected to be ok with it. Men also can do whatever they want to these women. For example “ To make things worse, he gets to be the master of your body” (230). They are being mistreated and are not getting any justice for it, which also makes them angry. Women are behaving this way because of the circumstances they can't control, and also having no control over their future.

Jason promises to marry Medea, but ends up abandoning her and their two sons “ Deserting his children along with my mistress, / Jason climbed into a royal bed, / with the daughter of Creon, king of this land” (16-19). He likes when Medea does wicked things for him, but does not agree with it when she does it for herself. She does many things for Jason, and he betrays her by marrying someone else and doesn't reward her for helping him. Jason tries to justify the abandonment by saying the only reason he is leaving is to provide protection for his children by fathering royal siblings for them. He thinks of himself as a hero. This abandonment leaves Medea emotionally unstable “ She stays in her bed and won't eat; she hurts all over.” (25). In <https://assignbuster.com/the-role-of-women-in-medea-by-euripides/>

Medea's mind, Jason is betraying her and she wants revenge. She is fed up with his actions and sets a goal to punish him. Medea's love for Jason is strong and she is willing to destroy anything or anybody that gets in the way of that, including him. She refused to back down no matter the circumstances. She says, " He won't see the children we had grow up/ and he won't be able to have any more/ with his brand-new bride: no, she's doomed/ to an agonizing death from my drugs" (786-789).

Medea is expected to serve two roles, being a wife and a mother. Now Jason is taking one of those roles from her. He says everything she has gained is from him. When Jason leaves her to marry the princess of Corinth, the wife role leaves as well. Now Medea is left with just being a mother. Women are taken as a joke and not equal to men. They have limited roles in their society. Medea's revengeful actions are caused by these limitations. In the book she takes matters into her own hands by killing her own children, poisoning the mistress who she felt had come between her and her husband. At this day and age, it was not uncommon for women to experience infidelity within their marriages. Women were usually home tending to their children, while fathers were out working and making a living for their families. This too edifies why women may have felt powerless and belittled. Socially, legally, and politically restraint Medea still finds ways to challenge the male dominated world. She possesses multiple characteristics which poses her as a threat to the women and men in her community. " We women are the most unfortunate creatures," she claims. Practically defending the idea that women are usually left with the short end of the stick.

In ancient Greek society ladies lived hard lives because of men's based communities. Ladies were treated as property. Until about a young lady's adolescents she was "claimed" by her dad or lived with her family. When the young lady got married she was controlled by her significant other alongside the entirety of her things. An old Greece young lady would marry around a 30-year-elderly person that she most likely never met. Numerous men didn't see women as human beings, they saw them as animals that were made to create children, please men, and to satisfy their family household duties. In this society they believed that women were supposed to birth babies to add to the population, it was their job Medea relates to this because her two roles were being a wife and a mother.

In ancient Greek a woman was not be viewed as part of the family until she delivered her first child. After she her first child, which was a hard and difficult process for a young lady to do, the spouse gets the opportunity to choose if the child is accepting or not. An infant would be left outside to pass on if the spouse was not happy with the baby. For the most part this would happen in light of the fact that the kid was undesirable, distinctive looking, or a girl. Women had no rights, they lived as slaves and serving men 24 hours every day. Ladies were shielded from society, limited to their spouses and their husband's houses, shouting out for help and justice but there was nobody there to hear their shouts.

While men had gatherings and examined matters of administration, legislative issues, and war, ladies in ancient Greece were banished from taking an interest and were not permitted to give their input on any issues. It is really unexpected that the older men from Greece adopted this one-sided

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strategy towards their ladies, while being in favor of Athena, the goddess of war, law, equity, and wisdom.

Ladies were neither permitted to watch nor take an interest in open diversion like theater. It is accepted that men dressed up as ladies to complete the job during plays. The life of a lady was tied to her being a household wife. There her primary job was to be a respectful girl, a great spouse, and mother.

Young children were raised and cared for by medical caretakers or other female workers. These little girls were not urged to go outside, with the goal that their skin would stay pale. Paleness was a sign that the young lady came from a decent family. Also, young ladies were the only ones that were permitted to bring water from the wellspring house. These water houses were taken care of by women, and no man was permitted inside. These regular visits for recovering water was the main open door for these young ladies to associate with each other.

These women were encouraged to respect and care for their dad and future spouses. They were to cook, clean, bring up youngsters, and make material. Little knew how to read and write. If they did it was used to manage the house and religious writing. Rituals were led for young girls to assist them with making a smooth progress from girlhood into womanhood. One such strict rituals necessitated that young girls go about as pure to find a great husband.

Marriage didn't take place after adolescence, except if the young lady had a place with a respectable family, or when her marriage had been organized when she was still a kid. The perfect age for a young lady to get hitched is 15

years. Her consent was not looked for before marriage, and she was offered to the man her dad considered reasonable for her. She was forced to get married. After an agreement has been acknowledged between the male individuals from either families, it was time. After marriage, she was to be an effective homemaker. Women were to please their significant other, and complete the work that they were assigned. Her greatest responsibility was to conceive an offspring, and she was not officially acknowledged as an individual from the family until her first youngster was conceived. Just the youngsters conceived from the spouses were viewed as authentic by the state. The spouse was looked down upon and abused in the event that she couldn't bring forth a child. As a rule, the dads would not consider their little girls as a part of their youngsters, proceeding with the cycle of disregard that women of antiquated Greece had to endure.

Women of old Greece were not permitted to claim property yet and were qualified to give up their share. A spouse could decline his wife's share in the event that she had submitted infidelity. Separation occurred when the spouse announced his goal to desert his wife before of an observer. The resolution to a divorce is to return the spouse to her father's home, in which the husband would need to restore the settlement to his father in-law.

In conclusion learning what women went through during these times makes it easy to understand why Medea did the things she did, not saying what she did was right. Medea does many things that society thought women weren't capable of. In this society they didn't associate murder with women.

However Medea committed many acts of this. She was limited to serving two roles, being a mother and wife. Jason left her for another, leaving her with

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just the mother role. Medea felt betrayed and her feelings were hurt. She wanted “ justice” on how she was being treated. Women are limited to certain roles. They are powerful, but can be destructive and ruthless when they feel betrayed. Medea’s revengeful actions are caused by these limitations. In Spite of the many trials she faced, Medea is the perfect example of a modern American woman today would be for her family. Although her actions were and still could be considered as drastic measures but were for a great cause. For multiple reasons we could deem Medea as a negative figure throughout the tragedy, however her drive to overcome the labels placed upon women was a remarkable accomplishment that can be remembered by readers today and to come. Recognizing the actuality of her mistakes, makes for great historic moments for women today.

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